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The Lover's Dictionary

by Victoria Watson

adultery, n

You always said I was lucky you found me when you did. When you cook shepherd's pie and you put pineapple chunks in, I don't feel lucky. I feel sick. I start thinking about David Beckham's squeaky voice but nice thighs and I wonder if Victoria Beckham blocks out the squeaky voice too and just concentrates on his thighs, like me having to swallow down the pineapple chunks. I don't think about David Beckham very often, just Mondays, and that time you made stargazy pie and ate the eyes.

beauty, n

It's in the eye of the beholder you said. Not everyone would see mine you said. I think you might be right, it's what my mother always said. I was the bookish one that did well at school, she said. My only redeeming feature was my hair, she said. Don't hide in your cardigan Yvette, she said. You might be right, but that doesn't explain why the man at the fruit and veg stall always gives me a wink and extra spuds. He always calls me beautiful, even when I don't buy anything. Alright beautiful, he said.

churlish. adj

It would be churlish not to.

What?

Accept the tickets love. Not really your thing and you won't understand the words but at least you'll enjoy the costumes.

I have never seen a Shakespeare play. You laughed in a way I had never heard before.

Why are you laughing like that?

Like what?

Like you're the one on the stage.

dickhead, n

I called you it once. You were laughing at my cousin Frankie. You said she only drank Tetley from a tin with two. You said she would think Earl Grey was someone in Hello magazine. Frankie has worked in a school for over thirty years, handing out plasters and ice packs. Listening to children crying over grazed knees, parents crying over end of year exam results and teachers crying after two hours' sleep. She knows enough already to not worry about tea.

eternity, n

It's what you put in that poem you wrote me. I thought it was a perfume by Calvin Klein. I'm not sure I want to be with anyone for ever. It seems like a long time. A long-time of eating sodding pineapple chunks anyway.

friends, n

Mine all ask me when you're going to pop the big question. They're desperate to settle down and all that stuff. Since we all left school all they talk about is having a baby, a real family of their own and getting a barbecue. They are always dropping hints, asking me what your surname is, all that type of thing. You don't have any friends. You just have your Nan and Stanley her dog who bites.

girlfriend, n

I saw your ex once, when you and her were talking in Argos. She had braided hair and braces on her teeth. She asked about your migraines even though she didn't have to; there was a man behind you collecting a 65" TV screen; he had to put his wife in the

boot. She called you Andrew and I had never heard anyone call you that before. Afterwards when we were driving home, you said you have never noticed her crooked teeth. It reminded me of last summer when I came out of the bathroom naked and you asked me if I preferred a vanity unit or a pedestal basin.

hot, adj

I think I need a holiday; somewhere I can feel the sand between my toes. I want to lie in the sun until I can only see dots before my eyes and drink things with umbrellas in. I want to read bad books and eat watermelon, spitting out the seeds as I go. You have never been away; you worry about the food. When I suggested a week in Crete you asked me if they had Hellman's.

idol, n

Your nan.

jealousy, n

I keep wondering why I am not feeling it. I should have seen her, smiling through her braces and handing you over your extension cable, and felt something, but I didn't. I just looked at her braces and thought how lucky she was to get things all straightened out.

kissing, v

You tell me I'm not very good at it. You might be right, there has not been too many to tell me. Little Laurence when we won the egg and spoon race, cousin Frankie and that doesn't even count, the second Steve from the butchers (nice but a bit mechanical), the one I cannot talk about and you. We don't do it much now anyway. You always have that cold sore treatment on.

lust, n

all I think about.

marriage, n

never

nice, adj

Most of the time you are. The rest of the time, I just think of him and David Beckham's thighs.

other, n

I couldn't do it to you, I know you're still not over your ex.

pete, n

The one I cannot talk about, but cannot stop thinking about. He has incredible hair and a degree in media studies.

quite, adv

ruggedly, adv

handsome

so, adv

so

terribly, adv

lovely

unbelievably, adv

gorgeous

very, adv

much

with, p

Trisha

x, n

XX

yet, adv

Not possible. We bought joint National Trust membership and signed up for online pottery classes.

zealous, adj

Pete never complained about my kissing; and I don't think he even likes shepherd's pie.